

ANNALS

MEDEDELINGEN

OF THE

VAN HET

# *Transvaal Museum.*

---

Vol. IV.  
Bd.

DECEMBER, 1913.

No. 3.  
Dl.

---

## THE PERCY SLADEN MEMORIAL EXPEDITION TO GREAT NAMAQUALAND, 1912—1913.

---

### ZOOLOGY.

By PAUL A. METHUEN.

---

#### *Introduction.*

ON the kind invitation of Dr. H. H. W. Pearson, Professor of Botany at the South African College, Capetown, to accompany him on a trip to Great Namaqualand, I was enabled to investigate the fauna of the Great Karas Mountains, a part of German South West Africa which had not apparently been previously traversed by scientists.

I wish here to acknowledge my indebtedness to the Royal Society of South Africa for having granted me the sum of £50 towards the cost of this expedition and to the Trustees of the Percy Sladen Memorial Funds for having defrayed a large portion of the expenses towards the zoological investigations carried out.

I would also like to add that during the whole of the time spent in Great Namaqualand we experienced the greatest kindness on the part of the German officials and others who did whatever lay in their power to facilitate the expedition.

*Itinerary.* Having obtained authority from the late Director and the Committee of the Transvaal Museum to undertake the work, I left Capetown in company with Dr. Pearson on 23rd November, and arrived by boat at Lüderitzbucht two days later. Here we stayed a few days and then left for our final destination, stopping for a short time at Aus (4700') 27th to 30th November, and at Quibis (4500') 30th November to 3rd December *en route*. We reached Nakeis (4500') on 4th December, the farm of Groendoorn (3700') in the Little Karas Mountains on the following day, and Wasserfall (4200') which lies at the foot of the western slopes of the Great Karas Mountains on 8th December. At Wasserfall collecting was carried on chiefly in the sandy plains below the mountains. On 23rd December we reached Kraikluft situated in the very heart of the mountains at an elevation of about 5200 feet; we left

this place on Christmas Day, outspanning at Bavianspoort (or Paviansforte) on 26th December and Sandmund on the eastern side of the mountains the following day, and on 28th December we reached the small military station at Narudas Süd (4500'). The last named place we made our headquarters for a fortnight or so, collecting being carried out as much in the mountains as in the broken plains which stretch towards the south-east and the Kalahari. Narudas Süd proved to be the most productive place we visited (at least in connection with the fauna). On 14th January we struck our camp and, the wagon retracing its way to Kraikluft, we ourselves took a short cut through Narudas Nord (5300') reaching Kraikluft two days later. The day following we ascended the highest peak of the range, namely Lord Hill's Peak or the "Scharfenstein" which rises to 7523 feet. On 20th January we quitted Kraikluft and encamped the next day at Alt Wasserfall (near Wasserfall) where we stayed until the 24th: then moving on we skirted the mountains as far as Dassiefontein (24th), and soon after re-entered upon the higher plateau (5000'), arriving at the farm of Noachabel on the 25th: and passing back through Groendoorn we reached the railway at Holoog on 30th January. By 5th February we were back again in Capetown.

*Physical Features and Geography of the Karas District.* That part of the district through which we passed can perhaps be most appropriately styled a country of sandy plains traversed by rocky—in fact exceedingly rough—mountains. It is not within my province to dwell at all on the nature of the flora, suffice to say that it is of a semi-desert character: the bushes are dwarfed and only in river beds does one see trees of any size; at Dassiefontein indeed the large specimens of *Acacia giraffae* and other species of *Acacia* give the landscape an aspect approaching the luxuriant, at any rate for Namaqualand. Water, as can well be imagined, is not particularly plentiful, though in the mountains there are several places where permanent water pools exist. We were fortunate enough to experience fairly good rains during January.

The Karas District is no other than that which was formerly occupied by the Bondelzwart Hottentots. As the crow flies, the Groot Karasbergen lie about 230 miles from Lüderitzbucht and at their nearest point roughly 100 miles north of the Orange River (due north of Warmbad), in Long. 18° 40' E.G. and Lat. 27° to 27° 30' S.

*Faunistic Features.* The nature of the fauna of the Groot Karasbergen may be said to be typical for that of Namaqualand. It is true that several new forms were found, but we may reasonably expect that further data will be added concerning the distribution of such later on. It is interesting to note that several forms described from Little Namaqualand were taken in the Karas Mountains, such as *Pachydactylus purcelli*, *P. (Elasmodactylus) namaquensis*, species of scorpions, etc. It would be hardly correct to say that Namaqualand as a whole possesses a fauna peculiar to itself since its fauna shows marked affinities to those of the Cape Upper Region and of the Kalahari; on the other hand it is characterized by several types which are not apparently found elsewhere: such types are *Palmatogecko rangei*, the genus here described, *Narudasia*, and others: these are certainly in some cases highly specialized forms. Though it is in the coastal stretch that one would expect to find the majority of peculiar Namaqualand animals—this is a distinct zone characterized by marked desert conditions—yet it is not surprising that the comparatively lofty range of the Karas Mountains should have yielded new forms. Among the Zonuridae this was certainly expected beforehand,

and the discovery of a new species only tends to confirm the statement which Mr. Hewitt and I made a little time ago, namely that the species of *Zonurus* have in some cases a localized and limited distribution.\*

A list of the species collected, together with descriptions, etc., is included in this issue for all the groups except the Crustacea Entomostraca, and certain families of Spiders, an account of which will follow at a later date.



Text fig. 13. Inspanning. Between Klein Karas and Holoog, Great Namaqualand.

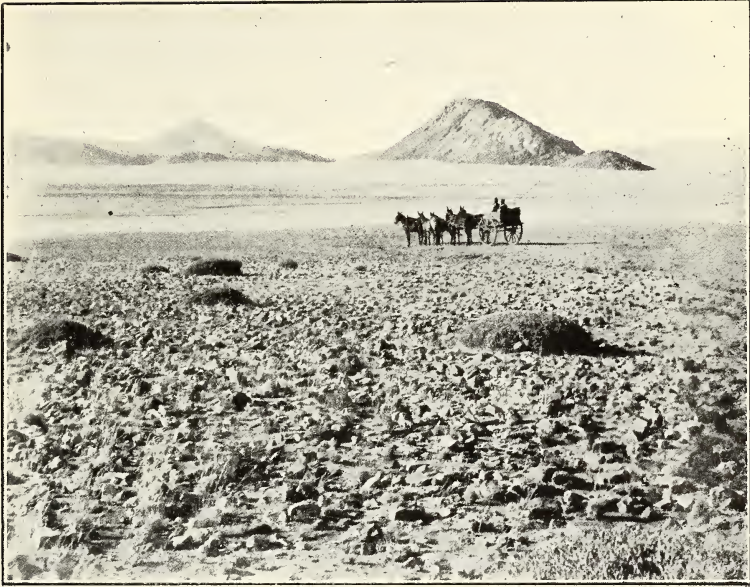
The collections of which an account is given in this issue belong to the Transvaal Museum, a second set having been sent to the British Museum.

The numbers given in the account of the Reptiles and Batrachians refer to the Transvaal Museum Catalogues, those for the Solifugae are my own numbers.

---

\* Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Africa III. I, 1913, p. 111.





*Plate XII.*

*From photographs by Professor H. H. W. Pearson, D.Sc.*

Fig. 1. The Plains near Aus.

Fig. 2. Between the Little and Great Karas Mountains: a "social weaver" bird's nest in foreground.



*Plate XIII.*

*From photographs by Professor H. H. W. Pearson, D.Sc.*

Fig. 1. The "Scharfenstein."

Fig. 2. A pool in the Great Karas Mountains.